

PRANAM

ANANDA MARGA SECTORIAL NEWSLETTER - MAY 1998

Sixth lesson

Baba stories

Comedy

Future Perspectives

Mahabharata and the Lord



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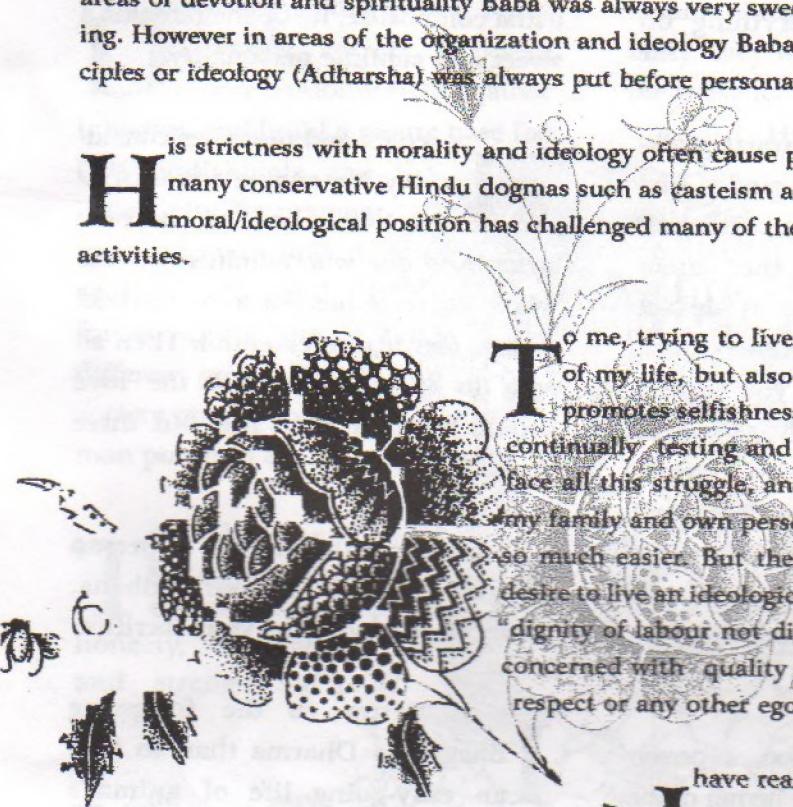


Editorial

As I write Baba's birthday approaches and I reflect on my time with Him. While enjoying this reminiscence I begin to wonder what it was about Baba that was so special and important to me. I concluded it was His personal example in the area of morality, selflessness and sacrifice. Certainly His greatness was fundamentally spiritual but that often was not so easy for everyone to appreciate.

At a time when the exact reverse is being preached and encouraged in society, Baba came with this simple truth: for personal and collective welfare we have to follow the path of morality, selfless service and sacrifice. Our capacity for sadhana and work depends how much we are established in these. All His life Baba worked selflessly for others, while maintaining a very strict principled lifestyle and conduct. In areas of devotion and spirituality Baba was always very sweet and loving; always forgiving and understanding. However in areas of the organization and ideology Baba was very strict and uncompromising. His principles or ideology (Adharsha) was always put before personal friends or interests.

His strictness with morality and ideology often cause polarisation. In India Baba was unsupportive of many conservative Hindu dogmas such as casteism and the dowry system. Similarly in the West His moral/ideological position has challenged many of the West's more selfish and permissive values and activities.



To me, trying to live up to Baba's example is the greatest challenge of my life, but also the most rewarding. Living in a society which promotes selfishness, cynicism and materialism, I find its crudeness continually testing and affecting me. Sometimes I wonder why I must face all this struggle, and wonder why I can't just concern myself with my family and own personal interests and forget the rest. Life would be so much easier. But then I remember that Baba once said we should desire to live an ideological life not an easy life. Baba always emphasised "dignity of labour not dignity of post;" which to me means only to be concerned with quality of service —not name, fame, power, position, respect or any other egotistical reason.

I have realised in Ananda Marga that selfless service creates a much stronger bond and understanding of Baba's ideology than keeping organisationally aloof. Baba created the organisation just as much for our own growth as to benefit humanity. I therefore am not surprised when He says that whenever we do organisational work He is there physically. Baba says that Ananda Marga is His body and by serving it we serve Him. To love him and not Ananda Marga, to me, is like loving his head but not His body, or like loving an artist but not his paintings. While He may not be physically 'alive' anymore, certain His 'presence' can still be experienced, especially doing His organisational work. Baba said, "Wherever organisational matters are concerned, I am physically there. Don't worry. You go and do your duty, I will be present."

But to do His work always requires a certain amount of selflessness and sacrifice of personal desires or convenience. The amount varies according to our circumstances. A sanyasin or a single person can usually perform more service for Ananda Marga than a family person. A healthy person may have the opportunity to be more selfless than a sick person. But something always can be done. What a lovely birthday present for Baba if we could decide to do more work for His (& our) Ananda Marga. And in the process we will enjoy His presence!

Narada Muni

BABA'S WORDS ON ACTION

The following are quotes from Baba that were compiled on the web page of an overseas margii.

He who has left him or herself entirely on Parama Purusa, Parama Purusa has special responsibility for him... It is the duty of Parama Purusa to save the prestige of the Bhakta, and the duty of the Bhakta is to leave everything on Him.

When an infant starts walking, the parent guides him to walk a little. He tries, walks, but falls. Then the parent advances and lifts him up in his lap. So also God. Make the slightest efforts and He will pick you up and place you in His lap. Truly, as long as we have life, we have power. Whatever power we have, you must utilise it to the maximum. After you have done your best and there is still for more power, then God will give you more...

For Brahmic meditation, a person does not have to be a hermit of the forest. The only stipulation is: go on behaving rightly and properly with every Brahmic manifestation of this elliptical universe. Remove or rectify the mental disease of the criminals—penalise or prescribe some other reformatory remedies—cure the sick of their disease, attend to them and arrange for their medicine and diet. Just remember this: you have to behave properly and reasonably with all—with every entity of this world. Pay special attention to the word 'properly'. By 'proper behaviour', I mean, in which there is neither anger nor jealousy, neither attraction nor aversion.

The human heart is sweet, because its sentimentality is sweet. And as the human heart is sweet, the human mind is also sweet. However bad a person may be, when he or she remains in his or her usual composure, he or she remains a sweet and sublime personality.

He scolds and punishes considerably. For simple administration, one has to become strict. And one who administrate the whole universe has got to be terrible. A little fear is also essential. Then all will do their work. Yes, the love should be more than fear but there must be fear also.

It is action that makes a person great. Be great by your Sadhana, by your service, by your sacrifice.

It is better to die following Bhagavata Dharma than to lead an easy-going life of animal's Dharma.

We should always respect our Ideology if we are to become true human beings. The ideologist is a person who always acts according to their Ideology. If by following an Ideology I die and die again, let it be - I will not care - I will stick to my Ideology.

There is no permanent death of any entity. The rhythmic sweet-ness of rivers lives eternally in the surging waves of the vast

oceans... In fact all entities are living eternally in Supreme Blessedness within the vast bosom of the Supreme Entity, from the state of beginninglessness to the state of endlessness. Nothing is lost, nothing was lost, nothing ever will be lost.

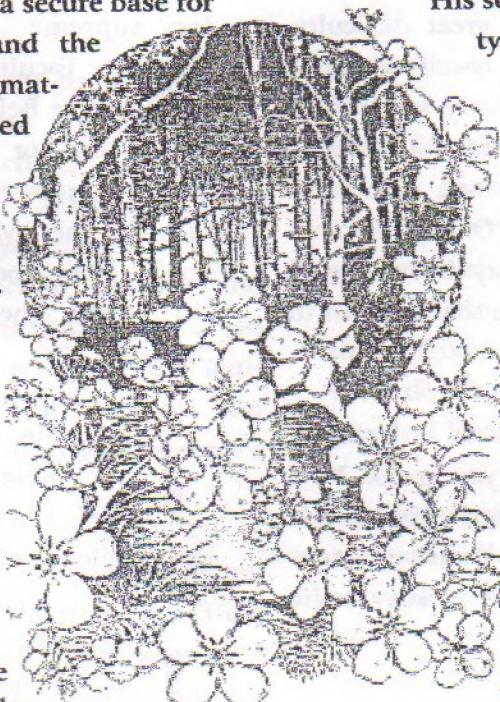
Do your worldly duties, build a stable society upon a sound economy, fight against injustice, and build a secure base for both individuals and the collectivity. Be pragmatic and remain united against all evil forces. Unite the different groups in society upon a common platform etc...

To become Great, develop modesty, honesty, courage and strength of character.

You have reached the proper time - now firmness is the need of the hour. Be like a monolithic rock.

I am complete in Myself, and I want every person to be complete in themself. I am like an arrow: clear, pointed.

To err is not bad, but not to take any steps to correct one's faults, that is bad.



There are people whom we call cruel because of their hard-heartedness. But if those very wicked persons go deeper into their beings, they will no longer remain wicked or hard-hearted. Mostly, they take only a superficial view of life. Had they gone deep into their minds, had they tried to realise Parama Purusa with their sentimentality, they would certainly have felt the presence of the undercurrents of

His softness. The difficulty with them is that they never go deep into their sentimentality and hence they have a tendency towards hard-heartedness.

Paramatma simply wants to see in you whether you have got a genuine desire to attain Him or not. He is testing you every moment, at every step and is seeing whether love for Him has awakened in you or not.

There should not be inconsistency between thought and speech. And when this is achieved, the celestial love is awakened.

What you choose to become, you will become...

Love for the feeling of Ideology and oneness with the Propagator makes one in-vincible and impregnable. One becomes like pure gold.

"You know, when a father leaves his family the children will have many problems, won't they?" His neice replied, "Yes Baba..." Then Baba added, "But it will be alright."

Although everything in this world is sweet, people have to taste that sweetness through severity, harshness and struggle. People must pass through struggle in order to experience the taste of Supreme Sweetness.

At a time of great difficulty, when agony swells people's hearts and they are unable to restrain themselves, the sufferers should say only one thing to Parama Purusa: "O my Parama Purusa, the life of my life, the pupil of my eyes, give me the strength to endure."

You should think a thousand times before you speak. Be a miser with words. Your words should mean more than your existence. You should be ready to die for those words.

If a mean creature in hell weeps and says, "O God, now I can no longer bear the torture. Save me." Then God will listen to him and protect him as He would protect anyone else.

It's a bigger thing to put one lesson into action than to hear many. You should put into action every lesson in your life.

You have to solve all the problems in the world today. You should prepare detailed plans

and programs and act accordingly. You must be the vanguard.

For bhaktas all actions are a part of their psycho-spiritual practice, whereas for karmis actions are merely seen as actions. Those people whose actions are indistinguishable from devotion are true devotees.

Only devotees can expand Bhaeravi Shakti because only they cherish the desire for supreme union with the Cognitive Faculty. They do not ask the Supreme Being for wealth, opulence, fame, or children, but pray, "O Lord, please manifest Yourself fully in me. Make me Yours, O Lord." They continue to pray like this until they merge in the Supreme.

The main factor is the clear awareness of one's goal. Your own excellence depends on the excellence of your goal.

This endeavour at the well being of the human race concerns everyone...It's yours, mine and ours. We may afford to ignore our rights but forgetting the responsibilities implies the humiliation of the human race. In order to march ahead on the road of human welfare, we have to build ourselves in all the arenas of our lives. The whole seed of welfare in all the spheres...physical, mental, moral, social and spiritual...are embedded in the 16 points. Hence be firm on the 16 points.



Mahabharata & the Lord

This is a second-hand Ba'ba' story taken from the global WWD magazine of January 1995. Av. A'nanda Gaotami Ac. was conveyed this story by Ahalya didi of Jamalpur, who was nearly the same age as Baba and grew up near Him. Though the words are of course inexact, the spirit easily comes through. The editorial remarks are by Brother Arjuna. This story concerns the Mahabharata and Lord Krsna.

Karna and Krsna

Karna lay dying on the battle field. He had been shot by an arrow that was buried deep in his chest. As he lay in agony, he remembered his beloved Lord Krsna [ed. who played the role of chariot driver and adviser to Arjuna in the battle, and who directed Arjuna to strike the death blow against the temporarily helpless Karna, against the code of Ksattriya Dharma or warrior's conduct code].

At another place Krsna was talking together with Arjuna. Krsna said, "I am feeling so much pain because today I have lost my great devotee Karna." Arjuna jealously said, "You are always speaking about what a great friend and devotee Karna is, but what about me?" "Would you like to see," Krsna said, "just what a great devotee he is, and what a sacrificing nature he has?" Arjuna replied that he would. So together they went to the place where Karna lay fallen. Krsna disguised himself as a beggar and went up to Karna.

"I have heard that you are a great giver, and you are about to die, so please give me something." Karna replied, "I have

nothing to give. Here I am dying with nothing in my possession but my body. The best I can do is to give you a mark of my blood which, if you take it to my wife, she will be able to give you whatever you ask." Krsna said "No, no, I want to receive something from you personally." "But what do I have here? I have only my physical body and my soul."

The beggar-Krsna said, "Your teeth are gold." Karna said, "All right, you may take my teeth. Bring a stone and break them so that you may take them." "No, you are the giver, why should I take them? You should give them with your own hand." Karna could barely move because of the arrow in his body, but somehow he managed to pick up a stone. He smashed it to his teeth and they broke. Krsna then said, "Wash them for me." Karna heaved a sigh and said, "Give me my bow and arrow." "Take it yourself," said Krsna.

All through this exchange, Arjuna was standing at a distance and watching. With great difficulty,

Karna managed to take an arrow and shoot it into the earth. Water started bubbling out [ed. the great Tantrika Ks'attriyas of that era utilised Mantras in conjunction with their weapons, as well as specially empowered weapons to give certain effects; see the Mahabharata itself for many (albeit exaggerated) examples]. He

t h e n

Krsna wanted to show the superiority of spiritual morality over simple morality.

s t r u g -

g l e d t o

w a s h

t h e

teeth and handed them over to Krsna. At that moment Krsna revealed His true form.

Karna gave his salutations to his Lord. Karna then asked, "What mistake have I committed to deserve this type of life? I am a warrior yet I could not admit my heritage. I could not acknowledge my mother nor my brothers. Why did you give me this type of life?" [ed. Karna was actually the son of Kunti and the brother of the Pandavas, including Arjuna, which tradition says was only revealed to him just prior to the battle; and Arjuna was told only after slaying Karna.]

Krsna came tenderly close to Karna and said, "Ask for whatever you desire from me." Karna replied, "I don't need anything from you because you are my everything." "I know that you are mine, but still ask something from me," coaxed Krsna. Karna then requested three things. "First of all, I would like you to burn my body in the place where there is no sin. And then, if You are God, and if You love me, your devotee, then

you should take birth in Angabhumi, my kingdom. [ed. the land of Anga in the present-day Angika speaking parts of Bihar] Thirdly, if you are really the Lord of all, then when you come again, you must remove casteism. It was all because of casteism that I received these punishments in this life." [ed.: Karna was reared by a chariot driver and considered of the Suta sub-caste, though he was the greatest of the Ks'attriyans]

Krsna fulfilled Karna's wishes in the following ways. First of all he burned Karna's body in the place where there is no sin. He cremated him in the palm of His hand. Ba'ba' then explained to his companions that it was due to Karna's wish that He took birth in Jamalpur and travelled to every corner of Angladesh.

I would like to add that as per Ba'ba's *Discourses on the Mahabharata*, that this was the second time Krsna came to Karna as a beggar. The first time, just prior to the battle, Krsna requested Karna's Kavachas and Kundalas (enchanted breastplate and earrings which made him nearly impervious to harm in battle). Karna, as the greatest giver, aquiesed, and thus knowingly went to his doom. Knowing that Krsna was the chariot driver for Arjuna, he knew his death was certain. Nonetheless, he fearlessly went into battle and did his best.



Raja Dhiraja Yoga

This is the final of the series by Ac. Cidghananda Avt.

Sixth Lesson

As the first lesson is capable of taking a person to a very high stage of meditation, that is Savikalpa Samadhi, so the last lesson gives the highest stage, which is Nirvikalpa Samadhi. The lessons themselves do not give liberation and salvation. It is the power of the Guru behind the lessons which serves the purpose. When the power is withdrawn from the lessons, the lessons are as good as dead. Therefore it is said: *Gurushakti da'yakah na Tantra no Mantrah*. That is: The Guru is the giver of force, liberation and salvation. Nothing else can give these things. Lessons have importance but without the Guru they have no importance at all. They become dry and barren. So the Guru plays a vital part in the life of a spiritualist. The sixth lesson is done in Gurucakra which is above the Ajina' cakra and below the Sahasra'ra cakra. It is rightly said that the root of *dhya'na* is the figure of the Guru. That is, one should meditate on the figure of the Guru. By singular love for Him and complete surrender one can achieve the sixth lesson. Who is the Guru and what is singular love of Him? The Guru is one of three types:

- 1) Uttamguru - who is the first class Guru or Sadguru.
- 2) Madhyamguru
- 3) Anyaguru

Anyaguru is that Guru who comes to the disciple, gives something and goes away. He does not concern himself with the rise and fall of the disciple. Madhyamguru is a type of Guru who comes, gives

the guidance to some extent but also leaves the disciple.

Uttamguru is 'Mahakaul' who is not only a God-realised personality but can impart God-realisation in the twinkling of an eye to any number of people by His wish. He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. Really speaking there is no difference between a Sadguru and God.

Ananda Sutram says: *Brahmaeva gurureka'h na'-parah*. This means Guru and Brahma are one and the same, and not different. Actually the physical

body in an all-pervading manner is the Guru. The Guru is without form and shape in the true sense, but sometimes Mahakaul takes the help of the

five fundamental factors and comes to the world for the welfare of humanity. When He takes the help of the five fundamental factors He is known as *Mahasambhuti*.

This Mahakaul or Sadguru has no spiritual Guru. He is born a realised personality. He is *Nirvanacitta*; that is He has taken the promise to come to the world for the sake of everyone's welfare. *Mahasambhuti* touches all spheres of life and wants to bring a radical change in the whole of human society. Human beings are compelled to hear Him, as has been said earlier, He is an all-powerful personality. Hence the real Guru is the Sadguru who has unlimited powers. In Tantra He is known as *Taraka Brahma*. The abode of

**Lessons have importance
but without Guru they
have no importance at all.**

Taraka Brahma is the transit point of Saguna Brahma and Nirguna Brahma.

The philosophy of Taraka Brahma is a universal and practical philosophy. He is the Cosmic Father to whom the devotees pay homage for the sake of His benediction and kindness, so that He will lead the people of the world along the path of development.

*It is
rightly said
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Dhyana is not
done but it
happens.*

"I"-ness is lost into consciousness, and when this state is broken an inexpressible joy and peculiar state of mind are experienced. In *Ananda Sutram* it is stated about this:

Abha'vottara'nanda pratyaya'lambanirvrti tih tasya prama'n'am.

That is, after the state of Nirvikalpa there follows a state of inexpressible bliss. Then one knows that the previous state must have been the state of Nirvikalpa samadhi.

In this lesson there is the upward movement of all the tendencies and their merger in the Supreme. The full mind with everything in it merges into the Supreme Consciousness. Therefore the flow of mind in this lesson is an upward flow. That is, the mind leaving the static part, the mutative part and even the sentient part of the body wants to merge in the

Attributeless Consciousness. The seat of Attributeless Consciousness is the Sahasrara Cakra.

Purus'ottama, who is the witnessing entity of the different activities of the mind, is not this state. This state is completely attributeless. With Purus'ottama remains controllership, but in this state nothing remains except the Attributeless Entity, which is Nirguna Brahma.

First lesson brings about a smoothness and thinness of the skin while the sixth lesson brings a brightness and glow to the aspirant. The sixth lesson gives joy and this alone gives bliss inexpressible.

It is rightly said that Dhyana is not done but it happens. Practical spiritualists know quite well that it is too difficult to bring the Sadguru in totality into the mind. Even if one has seen Him many times He does not come at will and even if He comes He comes very partially and for a very short time. The strength of the human mind is unable to catch His vibration but the very effort to meditate on Him and to catch Him is beneficial. So the effort to attain Him must never be neglected.

Some modern minds with intellectual development take meditation on the Sadguru to be idol worship, but it isn't so. It is because the Sadguru is Nirvanacitta and by concentrating on Him one can get Nirvana or salvation. His body is no body of an ordinary mortal; hence this isn't idol worship. The idol is made of clay by some artist and it is put in a temple but it isn't Nirvanacitta. It has the dominance of the static force of Prakrti. Hence the persons ideating on it pave the path of their own crudification as the idol is made of clay, which can neither speak or guide anyone,

nor has it any value.

Therefore it is said that idol worship is the lowest kind of worship. The Infinite, who is subtler than mind, can never be confined to the four walls of a temple. None are able to contain Him. The whole universe is held within Him. How can He be held within it? It is said that God is He from whom grace has come, in whom it finds its sustenance and to whom it goes.

That entity which is beginning less, middle less and endless, imperishable and non-changing is alone God, and that can never be given a form. Hence it is clear that idol worship is defective and not the worship of, or the meditation upon, the Sadguru.

Complete surrender means constant occupation of the mind with God and accepting the pains and pleasures of life ungrudgingly. Surrender can be likened to becoming a machine in the hands of the Supreme, remaining cheerful and leaving everything to Him. Clean or unclean, if one remembers the sandals of the Guru with devotion, he/she obtains effortless fulfilment in the Truth, life, wealth, desire and liberation.



"devotees never complain because they know the Lord is always with them."

Train station sadhana

Sometime in 1965, a devotee was with Baba in a small room.



Baba was in a happy mood.

The devotee told Baba that his sadhana was not going well.

Baba replied, "You go on and do more and more sadhana as it is your duty, and leave the result for me to take care of. Suppose you are waiting for a train and it is late, the how will you utilise the time?"

The devotee said, "I will read the newspaper."

"What is the better alternative?" asked Baba.

"I will propagate our ideology and do pracar," he replied.

"Isn't there anything better you could do?" asked Baba.

The devotee was quite close to Baba and so replied, "I could eat peanuts." Baba smiled and then said he should utilise the available time by doing sadhana. The devotee rejected Baba's remarks saying it was impossible to do sadhana in a railway station because of its noisy environment.

Baba responded, "You are so logical and never want to try."

Soon after this conversation a situation arose where the devotee's train was late, so he decided to follow Baba's advice and do sadhana, despite the noise. Because of the devotee's sannyasin uniform, the station people lowered their voices in respect and the devotee had a quiet, blissful sadhana.

My last Days with Baba

by Liila

The year was 1990, the time early March. I was living in New York City, working for a hospital in Harlem. Previously I had completed LFT training and had received Baba's Personal Contact (PC) as an LFT, so officially I was also working in that capacity. I held regular yoga and mediation classes and ran a "Lecture and Arts" series with some other Margiis at a university in downtown Manhattan. Our SWWS had asked me to attend LFT RDS in India during March, which meant

"Baba gave an especially long Virabhaya Mudra, and everyone fell into waves of bliss."

leaving New York by the third week of the month. But all month, as I did sadhana, I felt a strong internal message, which said "Don't come now, come to India for May DMC." This message repeated like a mantra, every time I sat down to do my meditation. I didn't know what to do.

Our SWWS had left for India a few days earlier, with strong instructions for me to follow as soon as I could. She'd even given me some things to carry for her, which she counted on having there. I'd also given notice at my job. Yet still the message kept repeating itself. Finally I confided this dilemma to the Office Secretary for WWD, who was posted in New York. Didi was fairly sympathetic and listened kindly. She also understood the pressure our SWWS would

be under to bring at least one LFT to represent the sector for reporting. At that time, Baba was very strict in this regard. Finally Didi suggested we call our SWWS, but I couldn't bring myself to let her down like that. Still, I also was loathe to disobey my own inner voice, especially when it came so strongly. The day of my flight was getting closer and closer.

The morning before I was due to leave New York, I woke up. Immediately I noticed a very strange feeling. One of my eyes wouldn't open. The other one could only open about half way, but I could still see a little bit out of it. I went to the bathroom mirror to look at myself. For a reason I still to this day cannot fathom, except as His wish, my one eye was swollen and wouldn't budge, even with cold water washes and warm water swathes. I called the Office Secretary Didi. She came to visit me.

"You can't go to India," she wisely said. "If it was anything else, maybe you could still travel, but the eyes are very precious and you don't want to take a chance. If anything happens, you may not get the care you need from the doctor there. You better stay here." We phoned the SWWS right away. While she was disappointed that I couldn't come, at least we had a valid excuse, and she could say very little. Office Secretary Didi

kindly did most of the talking, stating that my eye in fact was very swollen and she would be very concerned if I left New York. SWWS gave in. We made alternate arrangements for the things I was carrying to be brought to India.

The next day, when I awoke, my eyes were completely healed. I never had that trouble again.

As a result of that experience, I stayed on at my job for two or three more weeks. A global PROUT convention was being held in Copenhagen in early April, so I decided to attend it. In those days, and I think it's still the case, flights to India from New York City often stop in Germany, and passengers could have a free stop-over. So it would cost me nothing additional to get to Europe, on the way to May DMC, and thus it was easier to justify attending the retreat.

I had a blissful week with the European Margiis and Acaryas, as well as the workers and Margiis from other sectors. In fact, my future husband, Ramakrsna, was at that retreat, but as it was His will, we never even met there. We both later realised that we'd even been working in the kitchen at the retreat site on the same day, but under the veil of Baba's seeing eyes, we didn't even speak to one another. We still had

lessons to learn before we were ready to meet. I also met Dadaji Krsnasevananda at that retreat, and many other wonderful people.

Toward the end of the retreat, a special assembly was held, and Didi

Ananda Mitra told us

that Baba had

send a

message

from

Calcutta

that the

European

Margiis were to

organise a

Human Rights Day

in Italy, by the end

of April. Everyone

was in shock; it was

already mid-April.

Nonetheless, Didi asked

for volunteers. I knew I

was supposed to go to India

for LFT RDS at the end of

April, since I had missed the

one in March, but I still felt it my

duty, I supposed, to help out. I had

at least 10 days to spare! So I hitch

hiked from Copenhagen with one

Margii sister, took the ferry across to

Germany, and then again hitch hiked

with this same sister all the way to

Verona, via Austria, Switzerland and

the like. We had a very interesting

trip, taking six different rides, includ-

ing one in a red sports car, one in a

Swedish-driven Mercedes, one in a

van carrying plants and one in a van

carrying clothing, but all's well that

ends well. We also had a couple of

fun days staying with a Margii family

in Switzerland on the way down

Once in Italy, we went to work full-steam ahead in an attempt to help organise the Human Rights Day! We called many sympathetic organisations, including the Italian chapter of the African National Congress, Amnesty International, and many



other groups. But lo and behold, I received a phone call from SWWS in New York Sector: I must go to India right away. The next day I was on the train back to Germany, and after getting a new passport in Frankfurt in just a few hours, something I still feel was a miracle, I was on the plane on to Calcutta, to see Baba. I never got to see the how the Human Rights Day went, but I heard it was a success, by His grace.

Then in India; blissful days were ahead. Many Margiis had arrived, but there was still some time before Baba's birthday, that year in mid-May (It is always on the first full moon in the month of May), and before DMC, so we all luxuriously spent our time going between Tiljala and Lake Gardens, attending Sunday

Dharshans and piling on top of one another to watch Baba walk in the lush gardens at Tiljala. On these occasions, He would be followed by His personal assistant (PA), who carefully shielded Baba from the sun with a large black umbrella. One time there were so many of us clambering up the wall to get a peek that the wall started to crumble! Towards the end of May, the exodus to Ananda Nagar began. Floods of Margiis and Workers began to book their tickets on the Calcutta train to Purulia, and to make the 10 hour journey.

Once in Ananda Nagar, many of the overseas Margiis moved into the "Upper Hostel," where we crowded into our rooms like sardines! I remember actually sleeping out in the yard, because at that time of year it was quite hot and dry, and I think four of us just parked our sleeping bags outside every night and went to sleep under the stars, thinking of Him. But by His everlasting grace, somehow water was abundant; we all managed to get our baths and our drinking water, with some to spare, despite the May heat.

DMC was going on as scheduled, however I think everyone could feel the super-charged vibe that year. Baba had been sick prior to that time, and we all felt grateful to have some time with Him. At the end of the DMC talk,

The next day, several overseas Margiis began to make their way down to the train station to return to Calcutta; most of them heading to the train in the late afternoon. I was

determined to stay a little longer, but we were all being urged to leave fairly soon, as there was the usual tension between the local communist party and the Margiis.

In the evening, though many had already started to leave, Baba called another Dharshan, and we all raced to the Dharshan hall and packed in. Just as the Dharshan was finishing, almost all the overseas Margiis who had gone to catch the train came rushing, out of breath, back to the hall. There had been a huge brawl at the train station, and one Dada was killed, shot in the back by the Communists. Meanwhile, some overseas Margiis had been taken virtual prisoners, while most of the rest had managed to escape. Unfortunately, others had been shot as well, and were being treated at the Ananda Nagar hospital. We all went back to the Upper Hostel to make our plans

Our first plan of action was to start a 24-hour kiirtan under the large tree in the courtyard of the upper hostel. Then a patrol duty, mostly made up of Acaryas and LFTs, started, which patrolled the compound all night. In addition, Margiis with medical experience were asked to help out at the hospital, as some of the wounded were in need of special care.

The next day we split up into two groups, to be escorted back to Calcutta. One group went by train, and another, the group in which I found myself, was to go in the back of two large lorries! For six hours we wended our way along the roads, hidden by the high walls of the

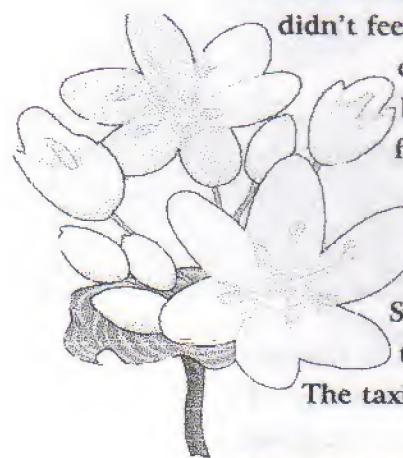
trucks, until we reached one of the neighbouring cities. From there, we took buses to the next city, and then everyone started to go our separate ways.

Most people were planning to stay over for a night or so before heading off, but myself and one Margii brother had plane tickets leaving a couple of days later, so the two of us decided to go ahead and take the next available train to Calcutta. Everyone else was staying put, so we felt like real adventurers

"Some overseas Margiis had been taken virtual prisoners, while most of the rest had managed to escape."

The train we took arrived in Howrah Station at two in the morning. I remember we got in an argument on the train. I mentioned to the brother that I had three PROUT magazines in the bottom of my pack that I had purchased at Ananda Nagar, which I was really looking forward to reading. This brother was quite nervous about the ordeal at Ananda Nagar and was worried we may be identified as Margiis.

I remember that he said he wouldn't walk out of the train with me unless I left behind those precious magazines! I was conflicted. I had been living in Manhattan for a few years, and was generally not particularly afraid of walking at night in a city, however as a woman, travelling alone in the wee hours in Calcutta, I didn't feel particularly comfortable. Finally I relinquished the magazines!



We took a taxi into the main part of the city. The brother was staying at an ashram in downtown Calcutta, where he had a room. I wanted to hint to him to arrange a place for me there, as I had no pre-arranged place to stay (originally we would all have gone back to Tiljala, but now it was impossible), because Calcutta had been drenched in rain and many streets were flooded. Besides that, I was carrying a somewhat heavy backpack and it was not the time of month for carry heavy things, and I didn't feel like walking around the city. But I thought it was better if I just tried to find some place on my own, if he didn't suggest it. I asked the taxi to drop me at Sudder Street, waved goodbye to the brother and got out. The taxi drove off.

Now you can imagine, by that time it was somewhere between 2:30 and 3:00 am, the streets were completely dark, I was alone and Sudder Street was flooded with water AT LEAST up to my knees. I had no reservation in any hotel, I had bad cramps and I was fully aware of all the things that usually were found on that street when it wasn't flooded! So I was thinking about all the things that could possibly come in contact with my legs under the water, in the dark of the night! Yikes. I took a step forward. Just water. Then another step, madly repeating my iista (and guru!) mantra. Again just water. And so it went. Somehow my Baba spared me the drama of rubbing against some dead animal or anything else for that matter. I was so grateful.

At last, I got to a hotel and went in. After ringing and ringing the buzzer, I was able to rouse some poor soul from his slumber, only to hear that this hotel was completely full. I loaded my pack on once again, trudged back out in the water, and moved on to the next hotel. Also completely full. I did this three or four, maybe even five times! By this time it was nearly four am. I was getting desperate, and very tired of moving through this deep water. My clothing was drenched. In places, the floods nearly reached the bottom of my pack. Finally, I spied a rickshaw waller, sleeping in his rickshaw. I went over to him, and knocked on his rickshaw. He awoke, and agreed to take me to a more distant hotel. At long last, we arrived. The concierge told me that there was one bed available in a group room. I gladly accepted it and moved in! By the time I had a bit of a wash, got out my sleeping bag and got in bed, it was nearly time for the first of the risers in the group room to get up, but somehow I still got in three or four good hours of sleep.

When I awoke, I remember feeling a bit blissful, like I had been through and survived some Tantric experience. The next day, many of the Margiis started flooding in to Calcutta on trains and buses. Then Baba Himself and His entourage came back. Not long after that, I had to leave, never to see Him again, never to hear His dharshan, never to feel His blissful presence, except in my dreams. But I remember those last days very well, the struggle, the joy and the force that came with seeing His form.

UKK FAMILY DISCUSSION

At the 1998 UKK over thirty margiis gathered to talk about Families.

The focus was on providing discussions that would give margiis some personal support and spiritual inspiration for family life. What took shape was an open forum of people sharing personal life experiences and insights into Baba's teachings.

We had a fascinating discussion in which the wealth of experience that lies in our diverse Ananda Marga community became apparent.

Amongst issues discussed there was talk about:

Relationships:

Love for partners/children and love for Baba - where does all love meet? Social friendships and sharing the path of bliss. Spiritual companionship on the fearless journey.

Spiritual support and guidance for our kiddies: Encouraging spiritual practice in a fun and relevant way. Sentient diet, your kids in a very big world, building strong life enhancing ethics/values, not little dogmas.

The need for Community: Exploring Intentional Community. Looking at the effects of cultural alienation and loneliness, Relationship to self, family, neighbourhood and planet, Spiritual company and the important role of our Dharma Cakra

Understanding our responsibilities:

Child raising, Organisational involvement - finding a role that feels right, Material security - economy ethics, looking at survival and new ways forward. Important role of families in social change, Service to the broader community.

The importance of recognising the two paths (Family and Monks/Nuns):

Recognising, encouraging and celebrating family life as a spiritual culture and a path. Providing a balanced window of opportunity for incoming and younger margiis - appropriate to personal needs.

The discussion was stimulating and relevant to all who attended. We hope these points will also create interest and direction for people who read them. To continue the sharing and support we need a continuation of some discussion or exchange on these issues.

We all thought we could further discuss the above topics through: Winter conference meetings - Panel discussion, pulling from questions and stories. On going Pranam corner.

*Baba's advice to a recently married couple
"Ask the boy and the girl to begin self-analysis from this very moment. After the self-analysis is complete, they are to make war against mutual intolerance - that is they should be in favour of maximum toleration and their fight is against intolerance."*

Future Perspectives

Part 1

Traditional accounts of the Prout, Ananda Marga and Renaissance movements take a number of positions. Most of these accounts are a historical seeing these movements as only reflective of the genius of the founder, of his prophetic words and visions. The future of these movements is destined - the task ahead is to operationalise them: at the material level through socio-economic revolution; at the intellectual level through writing treatises that show Prout's natural superiority as compared to other theories, largely Marxist and capitalist; and, at the spiritual level through meditation practises.

While to some extent this is a fruitful endeavour, what is missing is a sociological approach which compares the characteristics of Prout and its membership to other similar and dissimilar movements and a historical approach in which Prout is seen in the context of the contributions of sages and revolutionary movements of the past. In this article, I attempt such an approach, arguing

that the richness of Prout can be better gleaned by locating it in sociological and historical discourses.

"...the richness of Prout can be better gleaned by locating it in sociological and historical discourses."

world itself, he still existed and lived within other contexts, in real material and historical conditions. For example, we know that from Islam he borrowed ideas of fraternity, of the idea of an *ummah*, a universal community; from Gandhism, ideas of localism, of empowerment at the village community; from Marxism, a commitment to distributive justice; from Hinduism, *varna* (but now transformed as cyclical social history); from Confucianism, the importance of discipline and the family; from Christianity, the centrality of

Sohail Subhod Inayatullah

love in spiritual life; and, from capitalism, the necessity of growth, of an increasing purchasing capacity for the world's population.

Moreover, the deeper metaphors behind Prout and Ananda Marga, that of a family traveling on a pilgrimage together, are similar to the ideas of *ohana* in Hawaii, of the extended family that includes the animate and the inanimate, gods and angels - and within this family, each one cares for the other, and ensures that all move forward. While one can argue that Sarkar has not borrowed but in fact his ideas are entirely original, certainly they are original, but the originality is in the organic and civilisational integration, the reinterpretation of them, and their realisability through his social movements. One cannot divorce Sarkar's ideas from human history, all ideas grow up in certain epistemes - the boundaries of knowledge that define what is knowable and what is not - even as they, as in the case of Sarkar, transform these epistemes.

This said, we can move to a more archetypical level of analysis and ask what are the



guiding stories of humanity, here concerned with deep metaphors and not particularly with religions or ideological social and political movements. These stories, in our case, will serve to highlight both Prout's singularity as well as its similarity to other grand stories of what it means to be human and what the future can and should be like.

Contesting Stories The first story is the cyclical story. The underlying metaphors are derived from nature - the seasons, the tree of life or the river. There is a time for everything, a time for life, a time to rejoice and a time for death.

There are clear boundaries in this story. Civilisations that trespass these boundaries either through technologies that disrupt the natural (genetics or nuclear) or through size (violating the natural carrying capacity of the planet or by extending their imperial reach) are bound to decline. Indeed, history is but the rise and fall of civilisations, with the fall often occurring through a loss of morality (trespassing inner or outer rules) and through the natural dialecti-

cal dynamics of the rise.

Prout has a cyclical dimension, most precisely in its theory of history, wherein each varna declines once it limits the possibilities of other varnas, that is as it expands its own potentials, it limits others. Massive exploitation results and there is a revolution

Each varna goes beyond its natural social limits and eventually the new one comes in. However, Sarkar, unlike the Green movement and most religious perspectives, believes that there is a factor that can overcome many of these natural borders. This is humanity's creativity, which is often inspired by the Supreme consciousness. There is, for Sarkar, an attraction to the great, to a greater mind, a desire for a better society, that allows for the metaphor of progress in human history - not all processes are cyclical. At the same time, Sarkar does use environmental metaphors. He imagines future civilisation like that

leading to the new varna's reign. In Sarkar's model - taking a structural approach to macrohistory - this is the order of shudra (controlled by the environment), ksatriya (dominates environment through military and technological might), vipra (controls others and environment through a strategic intellect) and vaeshya (dominates others by extracting value from them and accumulates capital in this process).

of a garden with each particular culture creating a cultural ecology wherein all benefit from the other, a true global conversations of ideas and their implementation. And Sarkar is very clear that while technology can and will do marvelous things, there are certain cyclical processes that cannot be breached.

For example, humans will not be able to live forever, the brain can only manage up to 120 or so years. There are limits. Each

Intellectual Progress
"For intellectuals, spiritual progress is always delayed and the reason is this - that their intellectual body goes on increasing but for lack of apexed mentality, the Goal remains far away. But when the intellectual body is highly enlarged, it is sure to become one with the Macrocosm...For spiritual aspirants, this type of intellectual progress may be meaningless; it be treated as superfluous. But for the human society as a whole this type of intellectual progress cannot be discouraged and most not be discouraged; rather it should be encouraged."

-Baba

person's own life is limited and death is a certainty - death, unlike in technological stories of reality, is not something to be beaten back, to be feared; rather, death is the bringer of wisdom, the point of spiritual transformation.

The death of death can only occur through spiritual realization, through an ontological identification with the Supreme consciousness. However, even as Sarkar posits limits he does not reify traditional concepts of what is the natural; for example, he fully believes that in the future, babies will be created without male-female sexual intercourse and that we will travel to other planets. Thus while Prout has some similarities to the linear story of history, it also has cyclical components.

In addition, in Prout there is a dramatically different approach to the theory of progress. Sarkar contests the linear Social Darwinian and Enlightenment view, which asserts that the pattern of history is from barbarism to civilization, from magic to science, from the Aborigines to Europeans and from women to men - that is, classical imperialistic European readings of history and future. History to Sarkar has been tragic, wherein cultures have lost their confidence when conquered by the dominant.

pose of the the Prout movement is create conditions in which women, labor, nature and others marginalized gain their spaces back. Ananda Marga is a social and spiritual organization linking the individual spiritual dimensions of life with the social service needs of the larger society. Renaissance movement intends to create the intellectual conditions wherein an ideological struggle can occur. In this article we see these movements along a continuum, all equally necessary for global transformation.

**To be continued
next issue**

Women, in particular, have suffered at the hands of warring ksattriyas, cunning vipers and rapacious vaeshyas, as have peasants/workers and the natural environment itself. The pur-

Kiirtan Benefits

"Instead of wasting their time in idle gossiping, people should do kiirtan whenever they have time...When a large number of people do kiirtan...(their) concentrated physical and psychic force removes the accumulated sorrows and miseries of the material world...Whenever the devotees do kiirtan in one place, Parama Purusa takes His seat on the throne of their hearts. He shifts His nucleus to that place...All obstacles and dangers are removed by collective kiirtan - flood, drought, famine, pestilence, earthquake and all such natural calamities can be averted if people do kiirtan with sincerity. Human miseries will be removed then and there...Kiirtan removes various psychic troubles also...which have already arrived, and troubles which have not yet arrived but there are forebodings."

Baba



First Cloned Margii

Dateline 2001. By special correspondent Atmadeva

Scientists at the Dharma Pracar Research Institute at the Gurukul University, Bihar, India believe they are just a step away from cloning their first margii human. This follows a major breakthrough in their research in which DNA from a senior margii (who wishes to remain anonymous) was implanted in a chimpanzee cell and given birth by a surrogate mother.

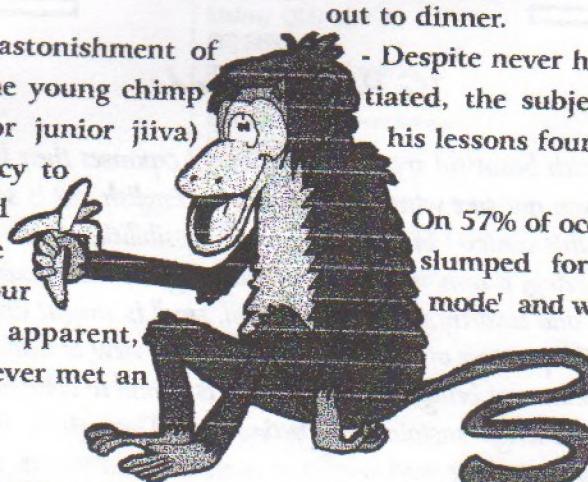
The chief scientist of the project known as MSAP (Mass Produced Margiis Solve All Problems) who wished to go by the pseudonym of 'Frankenstein' due to the top secret nature his work, gave details to stunned journalists at a press conference yesterday.

He tells of the astonishment of researchers as the young chimp known as 'JJ' (or junior jiiva) grew from infancy to childhood and the unmistakable margii behaviour traits became apparent, despite having never met an acharya.

Indications were wide ranging, and include:

- urinating & passing stool from a squatting position.
- Use of water was haphazard: it was splashed carelessly on and

"I think all margiis are potential monk-iis!"



around the toilet

- use of lungota was sloppy and the tail was often left dangling out. NB: this behaviour could be related to the fact that the creature concerned did in fact have a tail.

- bath mantra

was performed in a extremely rapid manner if the weather was cold.

- a propensity towards a large appetite, and in particular a desire for carob coated food stuffs. Furthermore, several margiis lodged complaints regarding the excessive amount of food consumed by the young chimp when he was invited out to dinner.

- Despite never having been initiated, the subject performs all his lessons four times daily.

On 57% of occasions his head slumped forward in 'sleep mode' and within this event,

Sdrizzling occurred 38% of the time. On other occasions concentration could be considered excellent: Loud, ecstatic shouts of 'BABA!!!' or 'HANUMAN!!!' were occasionally recorded.

- acting in a spaced-out manner- for example: leaving the taps running in

"I call upon all house-holder margiis world-wide to come forward and try our wide range of super-margii DNA."

the bathroom, or leaving boiling milk unattended in the kitchen until an unbearable stench informed him that his culinary efforts had been unsuccessful.

- His relation with his parents and members of his own species was at times strained by his differing ideological outlook. His parents could not understand the strange lifestyle, but in the spirit of an undiminished love for their off-spring, stated 'if that's what he really wants to do with his life, then let him go ahead- just don't expect us to have any part in it'.

The enthusiasm with which 'JJ' went about his pracr activities was startling and he has been nominated as Best Bhukti Pradhan 1998. Indeed, he could almost be called a fanatic. Yoga classes, seminars, Prabhat Samgiit concerts, and a retreat were held in the space of a few months. A

total of 958 monkeys and 18 humans were contacted. His efforts provide us all with a beacon of inspiration.

- asanas were done upside-down, dangling from a tree-branch. A special team of researchers are looking at ways to correct this defect.

- He has a general propensity to avoid paying dues. The research unit's economist found several highly sophisticated tax avoidance schemes.

In summarising his team's research doctor Frankenstein said the evidence is irrefutable and "We believe the results of this research can be articulated into the sucessful cloning of margii humans. I call upon all the householder margiis to come forward and try our wide range of super margii DNA. Why waste time and money trying to create margiis through seminars, retreats, children's homes and schools. Our method is much more streamlined and will bring about Sadvipra Samaj on this planet with a matter of generations."

The Hidden Agenda

Across the rich beautiful spatial and temporal expanses there be an odyssey (I am not sure whether this is proper English but it sounds effective in this context) in flux, open to all possibilities. Upon that continuum of being, a combination of vibrations give form to experiences of perception and awareness. Shape is found, smell is sought and touch is excitable. The presence of memories permits for a view to held on that continuum of being, but an occasion is bound to come when those memories can longer sustain that fleeting view. Through the balance of forces which propel the motion of that continuous adventure, the depth of each moment of experience reveals itself.

—Govinda

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Supreme Command

Those who perform sadhana twice a day regularly, the thought of Parama Purusa will certainly arise in their minds at the time of death; their liberation is a sure guarantee. Therefore every Ananda Margii will have to perform sadhana twice a day invariably - verily is the command of the Lord. Without Yama and Niyama, sadhana is an impossibility; hence the Lord's command is also to follow Yama and Niyama. Disobedience to this command is nothing but to throw oneself into the tortures of animal life for crores of years. That no one should undergo torments such as these, that everyone might be enabled to enjoy the eternal blessedness under the loving shelter of the Lord, it is the bounden duty of every Ananda margii to endeavour to bring all to the path of bliss. Verily is this a part and parcel of sadhana to lead others along the path of righteousness.

Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

Disciple: "Baba, there are so many intellectuals and skilled people. Why don't You utilise them for your work? Why do You use us who are not very intelligent and capable to do Your work?"

Baba: "Where would be the greatness in that?"

Crin Craig

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